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Newsletter No. I

Rees Odeil Bryant

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NEWSLETTER NO. I

March 1, 1958

Dear Friends:

August 1, 1957, the Procter Street church in Port Arthur, Texas, began supporting me in a campaign to raise a travel and equipment fund to enable me to do mission work in Nigeria, British West Africa. Since then, I have spoken 75 times, traveled 20,000 miles, and written hundreds of letters on behalf of this work. Also, I have preached many gospel sermons on occasions when brethren felt it was better not to make a plea for money. I am happy to report that generous brethren and friends have given over \$15,000 in response to this plea.

When you receive this first newsletter, my wife and two children will be enroute with me to Nigeria. We leave New York City on March 6 and arrive at Port Harcourt, Nigeria, on March 13. Our flight takes us to Nigeria via Rome, Italy, where we plan to spend five days visiting Patti's uncle, Col. ~~Knox~~ Silvey, and his family.

Max

Patti and I come to the end of the fund-raising campaign, and to the beginning of our service in Nigeria, with a feeling of deep gratitude to you who are making it possible. We say a heartfelt "thank you" to:

. . . the Procter Street church for their support, encouragement, and prayers. Originally, these brethren chose me to replace Billy Nicks when he returned to the States. But, when he announced his desire to return to Nigeria, the Procter Street church determined to send us both.

. . . the Culbertson Heights congregation in Oklahoma City, where I preached before entering this work. Although these brethren are sacrificing for a new building, they gave almost \$1000.00.

. . . other faithful congregations which have given amounts varying from \$50 to \$820.00.

. . . Mrs. Eva Herlong, who wrote: "I am a widow 65 years old, and I worked during the Christmas holidays as a saleslady. The money enclosed is part of what I earned."

Page 3
Newsletter No. I
March 1, 1958

to their children and grandchildren. They love us. But they love the Lord more. Mother said, "When you were a boy, Son, I hoped you would preach. Since you have been preaching, I have hoped you would go to a foreign field. You preach the gospel." All our parents share this feeling. God bless them.

. . . a host of others, remembered, but unmentioned.

Most of all, we are grateful to the Heavenly Father by whose grace we are saved and in whose Kingdom we serve.

May His richest blessings abide with you.

Sincerely,

Rees Bryant

. . . a fine couple in Lubbock, Texas, who wrote before the campaign began saying they were giving up a vacation to make a generous donation.

. . . a brother at Seagoville, Texas, who met me at the door of the church building and said, "My wife and I celebrated our 60th wedding anniversary this week. I spent the day yesterday plowing. Here is the money I made. You take it, and preach the gospel".

. . . Howard Horton and James E. Johnson, the first men that churches of Christ supported for an extended time in Nigeria. Their pioneer work in un-pleasant living conditions has inspired us.

. . . Ken Achuck, a native of China, now living in San Francisco, who sent money to a white American to preach to African Negroes.

. . . Wendell Broom, Billy Nicks, Lucien Palmer, and Eugene Peden who have encouraged us by their decision to return to Nigeria for a second period of service.

. . . all the other faithful men and women who have labored there. It is wonderful to follow in their steps.

. . . Gloria Guillot, Mary Cooper, Norice Ann Coffey, and others who have devoted hours to typing letters and records.

. . . the many homes in which Christians have extended the warmest hospitality during this campaign.

. . . men like George Benson, Jimmy Lovell and Otis Gatewood, representative of many others who, during the past twenty-five years, have built up a brotherhood-wide interest in mission work. Those of us who enter foreign fields now owe them a great debt of gratitude.

. . . a multitude of faithful gospel preachers in America who help the congregations they serve to lift up their eyes and look.

. . . godly elders who have said, "Come, make your plea. We will do what we can."

. . . our parents whose willingness for us to go has been a source of strong encouragement. It has not been easy for them to say "Goodbye"